

WARREN  
MAGAZINE

"MUTE!" A HORROR STORY YOU'LL REMEMBER! PAGE 17

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VAMPI  
#56

DEC. 1976

# VAMPIRELLA

DRUGGED... BOUND...  
HELPLESS... THE  
ALIEN VAMPIRESS  
MUST FACE  
"THE HEADLESS  
HORSEMAN OF ALL  
HALLOW'S EVE!"

VAMPIRELLA No. 56  
MOST FRIGHTENING STORIES EVER!





ART: JOSE GONZALEZ



OUR COVER  
VAMPI, in the clutches of evil goblins, is about to be dropped... but is she helping? If you think so, you don't know our VAMPI! Spectacular cover by the great Elmo!

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# VAMPIRELLA

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**45 THE FREELANCER** Deimos. A planet of perverse opportunity. There, for a price, you can lose yourself in opiate dreams. Or gamble your soul for ten thousand dollars a week for life on a popular game show called "This is Your Death!"

# Vampi's Scarlet Letters...

I can't say too much for the cover of VAMPIRELLA #53. I mean, I like centerfolds, but covers should illustrate the inside contents.

So Gerry Boudreau is the new VAMPI scribe. I must applaud that move. In the recent VAMPI issues, the best stories were written by Boudreau. "The Human Marketplace" was no exception. Boudreau brought in some fresh ideas... VAMPI helping the government fight a gigantic plot to assassinate world leaders. The way in which the villains died (explosion in the arms of the explosive cyborgs they were attempting to rape) was an ingenious twist. My only lament is that the story was too short. Ten pages simply wasn't enough room to develop this kind of story.

I am also glad to see that the quality of Jose Gonzalez art again equals that of his earlier classics. "Opium is the Religion of the People" was an excellent tale, also by Boudreau. It's harsh violence and cold reality hit me like a brick.

"The Professional" was an amusing tale with a real nice ending. Bruce Jones should have drawn it as well, however.

"The Last Man Syndrome" by Roger McKenzie had a good shock ending. Ramon Torrents' art was, as usual, excellent.

"Jackie and the Leprechaun King" though good, was too familiar. I expect better from Bill DuBay when he has only one story appear per issue.

**JULIO REY**  
Miami, Fla.

VAMPIRELLA's line of paperback are, on the whole, very well written. I've read the first three, and have been slightly upset by VAMPI's behavior in each of them. She seems so cold and unfeeling, especially towards Pendragon.

One feature I do like, though, are the colorful covers on each novel. Illustrations on the inside would make them even more appealing!

**TOM SODERBERG**  
Nashville, Tenn.

Please don't turn VAMPIRELLA into another anti-hero, especially when it isn't necessary.

In issue #53, she could have simply hypnotized Captain Silver instead of letting him drown in the quicksand!

But, positively speaking, Jose Gonzalez smoothly flowing art proves him to be the artist for VAMPI.

**CLARK DISSMEYER**  
Fullerton, Neb.

Despite Gerry Boudreau's fine narration, "The Human Marketplace" in VAMPI #53 was unsatisfactory. The plot was yawningly predictable, and the explosive, cybernetic concubines were ludicrous rather than bizarre. VAMPI's decision to let Captain Silver die did provide an interesting vignette, however.

The above-mentioned command of narration lent power to "Opium is the Religion of the People" (issue #51). Although he occasionally overdid it, Boudreau sustained a stark, grim reality throughout. I question the vengeful vigilantism that formed the core of the plot, however; one thing our society doesn't need is more reactionary peddling their personal brand of "violence" just for the sake of it.

"The Professional" succeeded... mainly due to Bruce Jones deft use of numerous reality-sustaining minutia. The small points; attire, grooming, seductive technique, established Peter Grant as a believable black-mailer and lent a distinct reality to each of his victims!

**ED O'REILLY**  
Ada, Ohio

Delightful! VAMPIRELLA #53: a fine issue!

"The Human Marketplace" rates as a good VAMPI story. Not great perhaps, but good.

A few things bother me, however. I hope the addition of a "secret identity" does not lead VAMPI to become involved in mindless, super-heroine type stories. And it seems unrealistic that authorities would be so lenient with even so lovely a law-breaker.

Also there's a slight problem in chronology.

The story is really a sequel to "Blood for the Dancing Sorcerer" in VAMPI #44. That was the episode where VAMPI travelled to Mexico under the name "Valerie Durrell" and where her forged passport was detected. But "Sorcerer" was a flashback which means that both stories took place before her arrival in New York in #43. Someday this may be cleared up.

"The Professional" and "The Last Man Syndrome" were both good, but it would have been better if the artists changed places. Zesar is good at fantasy while Torrents is a master of the realistic script.

"Jackie and the Leprechaun King" was the best story of this type Warren has ever published. Many have been similar in theme, but this is the best!

**BRIAN CADEN**  
Cincinnati, Ohio

VAMPI's story in issue #53 was great! It's about time she had an adventure that didn't involve a love affair with a dead person.

"Opium is the Religion of the People" was a horror story that could happen in real life and only Gerry Boudreau had the guts to tell it like it is. Who knows—maybe this story will shock enough people into writing their government leaders, and we can erase the heroin blight from our cities.

**EDWARD WOJCIK**  
Detroit, Mich.

Right now, VAMPIRELLA is at her peak! She's just had her 50th issue, she has a movie on the way, there are puzzles, posters, stickers, and paperback books! She's even made an appearance in PLAYBOY.

I think Jose Gonzalez is the main reason behind her success; nobody draws a more perfect VAMPI!

Recently, Warren has been trying and testing new artists on the series, notably Gonzalo Mayo. His work is really well done! But, his style is better suited to Merlin or El Cid than VAMPI.

Then came #53! A superior cover by Enrich, a similar story by Gerry Boudreau and Jose Gonzalez' fantastic art bring back memories of the time he was the regular artist for the series. The plot was a little on the bizarre side, but at least there were no stupid jokes or corny puns.

**JOE BARNES**  
North Miami, Fla.

Affer too long an absence, Jose Gonzalez is back in top form in "The Human Marketplace" (VAMPI, #53). What struck me most in this issue is his expertise with facial expressions, especially VAMPI's. In an exceptionally suspense filled story, she shows apprehension, disgust, bloodlust, regret, surprise, careful appraisal of her situation... all in a few short pages.

One thing comes to mind! At the end, Spectrum presents VAMPI with valid U.S. citizenship papers. I can't help but wonder what his reaction would have been if he'd known what she really was.

Since NASA officially hushed up the loss of their space probe in 1970, she returned to earth (issue #43), and date the ships' remains have never been found, what would happen if the remains are found?

**NORMAN E. DAVISON**  
Loring, Ma.

Interesting question, Norman. In fact, you may find the answer in a future VAMPI issue.

Issue #53 was an all 'round good issue. I especially enjoyed "Opium is the Religion of the People" because of Aureleon's superb art, and "The Professional," which took a different twist from what you usually find in a horror comic.

**TODD NEEDL**  
Jacksonville, Fla.

Regarding "Jackie and the Leprechaun King"... this type of exploitation perpetrated by Bill DuBay tends to get me angry.

As you well know, the story is a direct take-off of the old song, "Puff the Magic Dragon." Obviously the inclusion of the names of characters from the song suggests that it was a tribute, but still it disturbs me.

The artwork was excellent; I liked the story too, strangely enough. In fact, now that I think about it, if the boy and dragon had changed their names, I probably wouldn't have recognized its source.

**LARRY LISOWSKI**  
Levittown, N.Y.

VAMPI #53 was one of your better recent issues, with its emphasis on realistic, contemporary urban problems.

Bruce Jones has fast become one of the best and most original comics writers around, and with "The Professional," a thoughtful, disturbing story, he adds to his reputation. The plant suspense of the young ladies who allow themselves to be seduced by this unnaturally handsome super-stud is at first hard to believe. But on reflection, Jones succeeded in pulling the grey veil over my eyes, and that's the mark of a high-caliber writer, as far as I'm concerned.

"Opium is the Religion..." chronicled the tragedy of a young runaway who falls into the clutches of a perverse svenigal who turned her on to drugs. As in "Taxi Driver" the hero feels it's his duty to punish the guilty party personally. The difference between Travis Bickle and the hero of Gerry Boudreau's story are enormous, but both are linked by this feeling of helplessness born out of violence.

The other stories were all first rate, as well, especially Bill DuBay's welcome foray into the little explored realm of whimsical fantasy "Jackie and the Leprechaun King."

**GARY KIMBER**  
Ontario, Canada

## VAMPI'S SCARLET LETTERS

c/o Warren Publishing  
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NEW ENGLAND. SOME SAY IT IS A  
MAGICAL, MYSTICAL PLACE...THE  
STOMPING GROUND OF DEVILS AND  
DEMONS!



OTHERS SAY IT IS A PLACE  
WHERE THE DEAD FOREVER  
ROAM THE EARTH, WEIGHTED  
DOWN BY THE CHAINS OF PAST  
SINS...



TALES RICH IN LORE...REPLETE IN  
LEGEND ABOUND HERE. TALES OF  
GHOSTS AND GOBLINS AND  
WITCHES AND MORE...



BUT PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS  
LEGEND OF ALL IS THAT OF THE  
BLOOD-CHILLING SPECTRE WHO  
RIDES BUT ONCE A YEAR...

# THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN OF ALL-HALLOW'S EVE!



YET NOT ALL THAT IS FOUND IN NEW ENGLAND REEKS OF THE MACABRE AND SUPERNATURAL. IT IS HERE THAT **CONRAD VAN HELSING**, AN AGED COLLEGE PROFESSOR, AND HIS ENDURANCE OF UNLIKELY COMPANIONS CALL HOME!

LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT A NEW MYSTERY FOR YOU, DAD!

ACCORDING TO THESE HEADLINES, **WASHINGTON IRVING** LIVES... AND HE'S BECOME THE **DIRTY OLD MAN** OF SLEEPY HOLLOW!

DOES THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN LIVE?

SIXTH GIRL MISSING IN SLEEPY HOLLOW



I DON'T UNDERSTAND, ADAM...

IT'S AN OLD, OLD STORY, LOVER. BACK IN 1819 A WRITER NAMED **WASHINGTON IRVING** PENNED THE TALE OF THE HEADLESS HESSIAN HORSE SOLDIER...



...HOW, ON EACH HALLOWEEN NIGHT, HE STORMED THROUGH A TINY NEW YORK COUNTRYSIDE IN SEARCH OF HIS DECAPITATED HEAD!

NOW, THE NEWSPAPERS OF THAT TIRED LITTLE COMMUNITY ARE CAPITALIZING ON THAT LEGEND...



...TRYING TO USE IT TO EXPLAIN AWAY SIX MISSING GIRLS!

MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING TO IT... AFTER ALL, HALLOWEEN IS THIS WEEKEND!



I DOUBT IT, OLD FRIEND. I'VE SPENT A LIFETIME STUDYING THE SUPERNATURAL.

CASES SUCH AS THESE TEND TO HAVE LOGICAL, OBVIOUS EXPLANATIONS.



YET... SLEEPY HOLLOW WOULD BE AN INTRIGUING PLACE TO SPEND THE HOLIDAY, DAD!

I THINK I'LL TREK ON DOWN THERE FOR A LITTLE CULTURAL ATMOSPHERE!

WANT TO COME, LOVER?

SLEEPY HOLLOW? WHY NOT! MAYBE WE'LL MEET THE GHOST OF THIS MR. IRVING!



# VAMPIRELLA











YOU REALIZE, OF COURSE, ADAM VAN HELSING, THAT **WE'RE** GOING TO SOLVE THE CASE OF THE MISSING BEAUTIES.

**YEP!**

YOU REALIZE, ALSO, THAT ONCE WORD OF THIS VOLUPTUOUS YOUNG WOMAN'S ARRIVAL SPREADS THROUGH TOWN, I AM GOING TO BECOME THE **NEXT** KIDNAP VICTIM!



COULD THIS MYSTERY BETTER BE SOLVED ANY **OTHER** WAY?



THEN ARE YOU AWARE, ALSO, THAT I AM NOT AS **NAIVE** AS YOU THINK? YOU SET UP THIS WHOLE THING... ASKING ME TO COME ALONG JUST SO YOU COULD USE ME AS **BAIT** TO TRAP A KIDNAPPING **GHOST**!



I AM A **HUNTER** OF THE MACABRE AND SUPER-NATURAL, AM I NOT? AND I HAVE BEEN RESTING ON MY FAT VAN HELSING LAURELS FOR FAR TOO LONG NOW...!

YET, I DID HAVE MORE THAN **ONE** REASON FOR ASKING YOU TO COME **HERE**!



OH...AND WHAT WAS YOUR **OTHER** MOTIVE?

THEY'D **CENSOR** IT IN A MYSTERY NOVEL...BUT COME HERE AND I'LL **SHOW** YOU!

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, A CAUTIOUS, BUT SELF-ASSURED **VAMPIRELLA** TRODS THE SAME CEMETERY ROAD WHERE SEVEN YOUNG GIRLS HAD EARLIER MET THEIR QUESTIONABLE FATES...!



A DISCREET DISTANCE BEHIND, **ADAM VAN HELSING** TRACKS THE ADVENTUROUS GIRL FROM THE STARS...!



SUDDENLY...A PIERCING WAIL SPLITS THE SILENT NIGHT. STARTLED, **VAMPIRELLA** WHIRLS TO FACE HER ATTACKERS...THREE GRUESOME, CACKLING **GOBLINS**!

IN A FLASH, THE DEMON-CREATURES ARE UPON HER, STUNNING THE SURPRISED GIRL, WITH SLEEP-INDUCING GAS...



BUT THE ANSWER DOES NOT LIE WITH THE REALM OF THE MACABRE... AS VAMPIRELLA SOON SEES.

THE NEW BEAUTY'S COMING AROUND, DOC...

YOUR SLEEPING GAS DIDN'T SUBDUCE HER FOR LONG! SHE'S AN EXCEPTIONALLY TOUGH YOUNG WOMAN!

NOT TOO TOUGH FOR THE PHENOBARBS! THIS'LL KEEP HER DOPED UP... SO SHE CAN'T CAUSE TROUBLE ON THE AUCTION BLOCK TOMORROW NIGHT!

IN ALL OUR YEARS OF PROCURING EXCEPTIONAL MERCHANDISE, SHE'S THE FINEST WE'VE ACQUIRED! SHE'LL BRING TOP DOLLAR!

AS WILL MOST OF THESE OTHERS!

NO YOU DON'T, DOCTOR...! YOU'VE DONE ALL THE PUMPING YOU'RE GOING TO DO FOR YEARS TO COME!

GET HER, LES! STOP HER!

JES... YOU'LL WRAP YOUR THESPIAN'S TONGUE ABOUT AN IRISH BROGUE... AND HOLLYWOOD'S LOSS WILL AGAIN BE OUR GAIN. WE'LL SEE HOW MUCH WE CAN GET FOR A FRESH FACED COLLEEN OR TWO.

AND IN ANOTHER YEAR, WHEN OUR MONEYS SPENT, AND OUR CLIENTS HAVE TIRED OF THEIR NEW PLAYTHINGS, WE'LL HAUNT AN IRISH CASTLE.

BUT RIGHT NOW, I'LL JUST PUMP A LITTLE OF THIS INTO OUR NEW-EST MERCHANDISE HERE--!

UHHHH!

HA! HA! A  
HELLION...! JEST  
MY KINDA WOMAN!



WRONG,  
FATSO...



...YOUR KIND  
OF WOMAN...



...DIDN'T  
EXIST!



ZUMP!

AGHH!

S-STAY AWAY FROM  
M-ME...Y-YOU'RE NOT  
HUMAN...!



HOW RIGHT YOU ARE,  
DOC...I'M NOT HUMAN AT  
ALL!

I'M WHAT YOU'D  
CALL...A BLOODSUCKER!





# THE COMIC BOOKS

By Joe Brancatelli

## TARZAN'S TRAVALS

**Y**ou gotta believe me, folks, but I was honestly planning to bring you good oews for a change.

I was gonna tell you all about this brand new comic-book publishing house anchored by Edgar Rice Burroughs characters such as Tarzan and John Carter of Mars and Korak. I was gonna tell you about how this company was really committed to intelligently presenting ERB's creations, not just using them to shore up a sagging corporate image not worth buttressing. I was gonna tell you how this company had the foresight and good sense to hire Mark Evanier as managing editor. I was even planning to tell you about all the artwork by Russ Manning, Dan Spiegle, Doug Wildey, Alex Nino and Pat Boyette that this company had planned to publish.

Then the business of comic books got in the way and my best-laid plans went the way of so many sets of best-laid plans.

**A**s many of you may already know, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., the company which controls the fate of all of ERB's materials, recently decided National Periodical Publications should no longer continue to produce comic-book adaptations of the late author's characters. According to a reliable source in the company, ERB, Inc. was displeased with National's stories and artwork on Burroughs characters and disappointed that the company had not lived up to an apparently unwritten agreement to promote the lesser-known Pellucidar and John Carter features. ERB, Inc. subsequently chose not to renew NPP's contract when it expired earlier this year.

Led by ERB, Inc. president Robert Hodes, the company planned to start their own comic-book publishing company in the United States to write, draw, publish and disseminate the further adventures of Tarzan, Korak et al. The plan was ingenious, too. Since ERB, Inc.

was already producing material for sale to foreign publishers who sold the rights to Burroughs' characters, Hodes calculated these overseas sales would underwrite American editorial costs, thus making a normally tricky decision to form a comic-book publishing company somewhat less risky.

Hodes then proceeded to hire Evanier, a long-time comic-book fan, comic-book

Evanier-produced material as had been hoped. Although it seems unlikely that they were displeased with the quality of the work—they had been unimpressed with National's material, including Joe Kubert's Tarzan—they just weren't buying.

Nevertheless, Hodes pressed on and Evanier and cohorts continued to produce material, backlogging it for future use.



and television writer and generally upright gentleman. Evanier contracted the aforementioned artists, as well as writers such as Bill Rotzler, Doo Glat and himself, to begin producing ERB stories. Although Evanier, a 24-year-old native Californian, had not been officially appointed managing editor of the ERB Comic-Book Division until April, production on the new material began at the beginning of 1976.

At the same time, Hodes also began making the necessary production decisions needed to start a new publishing venture. He reportedly mapped out an acceptable scenario with both World Color Press, the out-of-state largest comic-book printer, and PDC, a large magazine distribution company which also handles Warren comics. Although no contracts were signed, everything seemed to be in good order.

**T**hen the hassles came. The foreign publishers, who have the option to produce entirely new material for their market or purchase it from ERB, Inc., weren't as receptive to the

**A**bout this time, however, the corporate roof fell in, too. Marion Burroughs, chairman of ERB, Inc., chose this time to end her reign as absentee boss. While it is unclear why she stepped in when she did, it was quickly apparent that she was now interested in how her company was being run. One of her first decisions was to suspend production of all ERB material and at least temporarily shelf the new company project. As a result, as this is written in late July, Tarzan and the other ERB characters are not being produced, have no contract with any American publisher after National's November releases, and apparently will not anchor a new publishing company in the immediate future.

**A**s for the future of ERB material, it seems reasonable to assume that Tarzan and the other characters will eventually get back into print somehow. ERB, Inc. could turn to Marvel and license them. Marvel would probably be interested, since it produced sample Tarzan strips in 1972 when the contract went from Gold Key

to National. Or ERB, Inc. could license Gold Key again, resuming an association with Western Publishing which dates back to 1939 and Western's old Dell line. It could even renegotiate with National, since NPP president Sol Harrison has let it be known he would be amenable to publishing stories produced by ERB, Inc. rather than his own staff. On the long-shot list, Charlton might be interested, but ERB, Inc. has never quite forgotten that the Derby, Conn. company produced several unauthorized Tarzan adaptations in the 1960s.

If I were a Burroughs fan, I wouldn't be terribly worried, though. Tarzan and, to a lesser extent, Korak and the other characters, are too valuable in terms of corporate prestige, potential comic-book sales and other dollar-oriented fringes to be out of the comic market for too long.

It's just that I had so wanted to be the bearer of glad tidings just this once.

## DIRTY LAUNDRY

**F**or those of you who might have been somewhat oopslashed by my essay on comic book writers two issues back, let me hasten to shift the blame to the friendly folks at Warren. It was a relatively lucid piece of work when it left my typewriter, but by the time it got through Warree Publications' production department, several key paragraphs disappeared because of space limitations. Normally, I personally trim the column, but this one got lost in the shuffle somehow.

None of this explanation makes the column more readable, but I thought you should know—just in case you were considering me for a \$10,000 free-lance assignment or something.

*Joe Brancatelli is an editor and writer for Fairchild Publications, the nation's largest chain of business publications. He actively solicits your comments on the comic-book world.*



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# MUTE

THE ROOM WAS SCANTILY LIT, BECAUSE TURP PREFERRED IT THAT WAY. MAHER'S ADAGIO FROM THE NINTH SYMPHONY SWELLED DEMULGENTLY ON THE STEREO, BECAUSE TURP LIKED MAHLER BEST. A TATTERED, POWDER BLUE COMFORTER LAY ATOP HIS PROSTRATE FORM, KNOTTED IN ANXIOUS FOLDS BY TURP'S RESTLESS HANDS--BECAUSE TURP'S MOTHER HAD KNIT IT FOR HIM.

AND NOW THE SOUNDS OF DR. PRESCOTT'S VOICE JOINED EVENLY WITH THE SYMPHONY, REPEATING IN SOOTHING TONES THAT WHICH IT HAD REPEATED 60 MANY TIMES BEFORE--TELLING TURP WHAT HE WANTED TO HEAR...

YOU LOOK VERY WELL TODAY TURP...VERY CONFIDENT. I BELIEVE PERHAPS TODAY YOU'LL TALK WITH US. MAY WE HOPE FOR THAT EVENTUALITY, TURP? VERY WELL.

YOU KNOW OUR PROCEDURE. I'M GOING TO SIT HERE QUIETLY NOW AND AWAIT YOUR ANSWER. I'LL WAIT PATIENTLY AS LONG AS IT IS NECESSARY FOR YOU TO FIND YOUR VOICE.

NOT UNTIL YOU DO CAN WE HOPE TO CURE YOU, TURP. THE ANSWERS MUST COME FROM YOU, NOT US. IT'S CALLED CLIENT-CENTERED THERAPY, TURP AND IT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. NOW, JUST TAKE YOUR TIME AND RELAX...WHEN YOU'RE READY TO TALK...I'M READY TO LISTEN...

AND THEN MAGICALLY...MIRACULOUSLY... AFTER THREE YEARS OF SILENCE, TURP OPENED HIS MOUTH TO SPEAK.

I... I WANT TO TALK TO YOU, DR. PRESCOTT. I... I NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE! IT'S BEEN... BOTTLED UP FOR SO LONG. I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR...

OKAY. I RECKON I'M READY NOW... LONG AS IT'S YOU I'M TALKIN' TO...

"FIRST, THOUGH, WE GOTTA GO BACK A WAY... BACK TO JUNIPER RIDGE SCHOOL AND THE TENTH GRADE. LIKE THEY PROBABLY TOLD YOU... I WASN'T ALWAYS MUTE.

...AND THE INCLUDED SIDE OF THE OTHER; THE TRIANGLES ARE CONGRUENT.

THAT'S VERY GOOD, TURP. YOU MAY TAKE YOUR BEAT.

"I WAS A GOOD STUDENT. BETTER, MOST. BUT SOMETIMES MY... MY MIND WOULD TEND TO... WANDER. MOST TIMES ON ACCOUNT OF CRYSTAL SMITH TWO ROWS AHEAD OF ME. I LIKE TO NEVER CONCENTRATE WITH HER AROUND!

"I NEVER HAD THE NERVE TO TALK WITH HER... THOUGH SECRETLY I THINK SHE WANTED ME TO. BUT SHE WAS MY GIRL, ALL RIGHT... EVEN IF SHE DIDN'T KNOW IT... EVEN IF BILLY MAXLER DIDN'T KNOW IT!

WELL, WELL... THE EVER DILIGENT DR. PRESCOTT / AND WHOSE SKULL ARE WE INVADING THESE DAYS? I HEAR FROM THE VINE YOU'VE GOT A MUTE ON YOUR HANDS.

GOOD AFTERNOON, DR. STUART. DID WE HAVE AN APPOINTMENT?

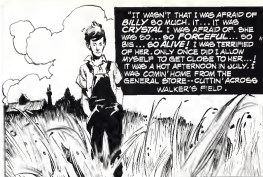
ACTUALLY... NO. BUT YOUR RECEPTIONIST LET ME IN ANYWAY. SHE'S CRAZY ABOUT ME YOU KNOW. NOW WHY IS IT YOU DON'T FOLLOW HER EXAMPLE? YOU KNOW, YOU COULD LEARN A LOT FROM...

DR. STUART, I'M TERRIBLY BUSY RIGHT NOW AS YOU CAN SEE. I HAVE MY ROUNDS!

YOU CERTAINLY DO, DR. PRESCOTT... IN ABUNDANCE! WHY DON'T YOU AND YOUR "ROUNDS" ACCOMPANY ME TO DINNER TONIGHT AT JERRY'S? I KNOW A WAITRESS WHO CAN GUARANTEE US A GOOD TABLE.

I'M SURE SHE CAN, HOWEVER. I HAVE A PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CLINIC TONIGHT. THANK YOU, GOOD -DAY, DOCTOR.

"I COULD HARDLY CONTAIN MYSELF SEEN' THEM TOGETHER. CRYSTAL WAS MY GIRL, NOT HIS! SOMETIMES... SOMETIMES I THINK SHE ONLY DATED HIM TO MAKE ME JEALOUS... DARN! ME TO STEP IN AND CLAIM HER AS MINE!



"IT WASN'T THAT I WAS AFRAID OF BILLY SO MUCH. IT... IT WAS CRYSTAL I WAS AFRAID OF. SHE WAS SO... SO FORCEFUL... SO BIG... SO ALIVE! I WAS TERRIFIED OF HER. ONLY ONCE DID I ALLOW MYSELF TO GET CLOSE TO HER...! IT WAS A HOT AFTERNOON IN JULY. I WAS COMIN' HOME FROM THE GENERAL STORE--CUTTIN' ACROSS WALKER'S FIELD.

"I CAME UPON HER SUDDEN LIKE. SHE NEAR TOOK MY BREATH AWAY. I WEMBER THINKIN' I'VE COME UPON ONE OF GOD'S ANGELS FALLEN FROM HEAVEN...!"



"I KNELT DOWN WITHOUT KNOWIN' IT... LIKE IN A DREAM... MY HEART CRASHIN' SO LOUD IN MY CHEST I WAS SURE IT'D WAKEN HER. LYIN' THERE THAT WAY SO STILL AND SWEET, I WASN'T AFRAID OF HER NO MORE! I... I COULD SMELL THE NATCH'RAL OIL IN HER HAIR... FEEL HER GENTLE BREATH ON MY ARM. I... I WANTED TO... TO...



"... TO SEE YOU ONCE IN AWHILE AFTER WORK... IS THAT A CRIME, DOCTOR?"

"IT IS A CRIME, IF IT STANDS BETWEEN ME AND THIS POOR CHILD. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE CASE, DOCTOR STUART? IT'S A PARTICULARLY TRAGIC AND PATHETIC ONE."



"LOOK AT HIM, DOCTOR! UNDERWEIGHT, UNDERDEVELOPED. BOTH PARENTS DECEASED. MUTE FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. WHY?"



"HIS TEACHER FOUND HIM IN THE CELLAR OF THE SHACK HIS PARENTS LEFT TO HIM. GROVELING ON THE FLOOR... EATING THE DIRT! AND PRIOR TO THAT DAY SHE CONSIDERED HIM A PROMISING STUDENT!"

"HE'S SEETHING INSIDE! SCREAMING SILENTLY WITH THE NEED TO TELL US SOMETHING! AND I'M GOING TO STAY WITH HIM UNTIL HE DOES! I'M GOING TO STAY RIGHT BY HIS SIDE!"

"M-M-M... LUCKY BOY!"

"OH, REALLY, DOCTOR!"



"SHE WAS AWAKE AGAIN... ALIVE AGAIN. I... I WAS TERRIFIED OF HER. SHE WAS LIKE A... A GIANTESS, LOOMING OVER ME!"



"A WEEK LATER SOMETHIN' HAPPENED THAT I DIDN'T FIND OUT ABOUT 'TILL LATER. CRYSTAL AND BILLY WERE OUT ON SNAKE RIVER TOGETHER. BILLY WAS DRUNK. HE GOT REAL ROWDY WHEN HE DRANK...."



"CRYSTAL WENT DOWN ONCE AND NEVER CAME UP AGAIN. BILLY MADE IT TO SHORE AND THAT AFTERNOON HALF THE COUNTY TURNED OUT TO LOOK FOR CRYSTAL... ALL OF US HOPIN' SHE MIGHT HAVE SURFACED AGAIN SOMEWHERE DOWNSTREAM...!"

MAH DOGS ARE ALL IN JUD. THIS IS HOPELESS. I'M HEADIN' IN.

DO LIKE YA PLEASE, GEORGE CARTWRIGHT. I'LL NOT STOP 'TILL AH'VE FOUND MAH LITTLE GIRL...

"I WANDERED WAY DOWN RIVER AHEAD OF THE OTHERS. MY HEART TORN APART INSIDE ME. AND ALL AT ONCE THERE SHE WAS... LYIN' QUIETLY AMONG THE REEDS, ROCKIN' GENTLY IN THE EVENIN' SHALLOWS. SHE LOOKED FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE THAT GUY IN WALKER'S FIELD ON HER SKINNIN' BLANKET..."



"I BENT DOWN THERE IN THE WATER, PUT MY ARMS AROUND HER AND MOVED HER GENTLY ONTO THE BANK... HER ARMS JUST SEEMED TO GO AROUND ME NATCH'RL LIKE... LIKE SHE'D BEEN LAYIN' THERE WAITIN' FOR ME TO COME. I COULD ALMOST SEE HER SMILE QUIETLY AT ME... ALMOST HEAR HER SWEET VOICE..."



"TURP... SHE WAS SAYIN, TURP DARLIN... NOW WE CAN BE TOGETHER... NOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID... I LOOKED DOWN AT HER THERE IN THE MUD... AND SHE LOOKED SO SMALL AND DELICATE... AND HELPLESS!"



LET ME SEE IF I CAN PAINT THE SCENE: YOUR OFFICE IS DARK... EXCEPT FOR THE DESK LAMP... UNDER WHICH IS STACKED AN AVALANCHE OF PAPERS PERTAINING TO ONE TURP JOHNSON: MUTE.

YOUR EYES ARE RED... YOUR HAIR NEEDS WASHING... YOUR MOUTH IS THICK WITH CIGARETTE TASTE... WHAT LITTLE MAKE-UP YOU GUE NEEDS RE-PLACEMENT. ALL IN ALL YOU LOOK QUITE LOVELY.

AND YOU'RE DYING FOR SOME COMPANY, RIGHT, DR. PRESCOTT?



YOU ARE CORRECT ON ALL BUT ONE EVALUATION, DR. STUART. I'LL LET YOU GUESS WHICH IT IS. GOOD NIGHT.



"THE RIVER... THE WOODS... THE WHOLE WORLD JUST SEEMED TO MELT AWAY. ALL I COULD HEAR WAS CRYSTAL'S SWEET VOICE IN MY EARS, RISEN' HIGHER AND HIGHER."



"CRYSTAL WAS TALKIN' FASTER AND FASTER NOW... WHISPERIN' SOFTLY IN MY EAR... INSTRUCTIN' ME WHAT TO DO... GUIDIN' MY HANDS... URGIN' ME ON! I... I COULDN'T SEEM TO GET MY BREATH..."



OH MY GOD!

SWEET JESUS...



FILTHY SHOUL! PERVERTED MONSTER! DEFILE MY LITTLE GIRL. WILL YOU! I'LL SHOW YOU! I'LL TEACH YOU!



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!

I'LL HAVE TO REPORT YOU TO HENDERSON FOR THAT!

BE MY GUEST, JUST CAME FROM THERE. HE'S WORRIED ABOUT YOUR HEALTH... FEELS YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD ON THIS JOHNSON CASE. SO DO I.



LOOK, JANICE... I'M TRYING TO HELP. YOU'RE TOO CLOSE TO THIS THING. YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT AND GET SOME FRESH AIR ONCE IN AWHILE... IF NOT WITH ME, THEN SOMEONE ELSE. YOU LOOK WRETCHED!



SO YOU'VE POINTED OUT, REPEATEDLY! BE KIND ENOUGH TO LEAVE THIS OFFICE PROMPTLY. DR. STUART OR I PROMISE YOU I'LL PICK UP THAT PHONE!





"IT WAS NEAR **DAWN** WHEN THE FOOTSTEPS  
CAME ECHOIN' OVER THE HOLLER. I DON'T  
'MEMBER MUCH OF THIS PART... ONLY WHAT I  
COULD **PIECE TOGETHER** LATER..."



"I NEVER FOUND OUT WHICH OF THE  
TOWNSMEN FINALLY TOOK **PITY** ON  
ME..."



... **DEAR  
GOD...**



"I WAS HOLDIN' ONTO THAT THING FOR **DEAR LIFE**.  
IT TOOK **TWO MEN** TO **PRY US APART!**"



**HI,  
GLADYS!**

I'M SORRY, DR. STUART,  
DR. PRESCOTT IS ON VA-  
CATION.

DON'T I KNOW  
IT! I THINK I LEFT MY  
PIPE IN HER OFFICE.  
GLADYS... DO YOU  
MIND IF I  
CHECK?



THAT'S  
AGAINST THE  
**RULES,  
DOCTOR.**

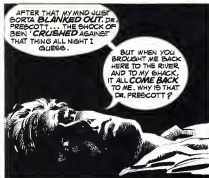
YOU  
DID, LAST  
WEEK... BUT  
TELL ME  
AGAIN,  
PLEASE!

GLADYS DEAR,  
DID ANYONE EVER  
TELL YOU YOUR  
**EYES ARE LIKE  
LIMPID POOLS OF  
LUST?**



**'RELEASED?'**  
WHAT THE  
HELL--?









# SKRUFFY'S GARGOYLE!



WHY, DAD? WHY SKRUFFY?

WHY DID GOD HAVE TO TAKE SKRUFFY AWAY FROM US? HE'S STILL A BABY!



A-AND WHY DO THEY HAVE THAT DAMN MONSTER LOOKING DOWN AT SKRUFFY LIKE HE'S A...A PIECE OF DEAD MEAT? SOB.

SON!



I KNOW HOW YOU'RE FEELING, TIMMY. ANGRY, HURT, FULL OF GRIEF, I...I UNDERSTAND SON.

YOU LOVED YOUR BROTHER.

WE ALL LOVED SKRUFFY.



YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I CURSED GOD WHEN HE BECAME ILL... AS I WATCHED HIM DIE... CRYING FROM THE TERRIBLE PAIN!

I WANTED TO DIE WITH HIM, WATCHING HIS CONFUSION... FEAR, WHILE HE FELT HIS INTRIDES BEING EATEN AWAY BY THAT DAMNED DISEASE!



BUT WHEN SKRUFFY'S TIME CAME, I WAS GLAD FOR HIM, TIMMY

HIS HURTING WAS OVER, AND SKRUFFY WAS FINALLY AT PEACE.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW GOD COULD LET A LITTLE FELLOW LIKE SKRUFFY SUFFER SO MUCH, TIMMY.

I-IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM RIGHT!



BUT HE'S AT REST NOW, SON. AND THE ANGELS AND THEIR HELPER UP THERE ARE TAKING OUR PLACE, WATCHING OVER THE LITTLE GUY.



I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND, DAD?

THAT "MONSTER" IS THE GUARDIAN OF SKRUFFY'S SOUL, TIMMY.

HE'S CALLED A GARGOYLE... HE'S JUST A STONE COLD, GROTESQUE STATUE, BUT HIS COUNTERPART CAN BE FOUND IN EVERY CHURCH THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN.

HE'S A TRADITION... A TRADITION AS OLD AS FUNERALS!



Y' SEE ... AT ONE TIME, PEOPLE BELIEVED THAT WHEN A PERSON **DIED** THERE WOULD BE **DEMONS** LURKING IN THE SHADOWS, JUST WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO **STEAL** HIS SOUL.

THE DEMONS WANTED TO **IMPRISON** IT... SPIRIT IT OFF TO **HELL** BEFORE THE ANGELS HAD A CHANCE TO GUIDE THAT SOUL ON ITS PATH TO HEAVEN.



"AN OLD, OLD LEGEND TELLS OF AN AGED **STONEWORKER** WHO HAD LIVED A LONG, FULL, AND **JUST** LIFE."



"HE KNEW **DEATH** WOULD CALL UPON HIM SHORTLY, YET THE OLD MAN WAS **NOT** AFRAID, NOT OF **DYING**. FOR HE WAS A **GOOD** MAN AND HAD NOTHING TO **FEAR** COME HIS JUDGEMENT."



"YET, THE OLD MAN WAS FRIGHTENED THAT HIS SOUL WOULD BE **STOLEN** BY WICKED, TRICKSTER **DEMONS**... AND CARTED AWAY TO **HELL**... THERE TO SPEND AN ETERNITY OF **TORMENT**."



"THE **STONEWORKER**, HOWEVER, HAD LIVED MANY YEARS. HE WAS **CUNNING**. AND HE SOON DEvised A WAY TO **THWART** THE DEMON THIEVES."



"HE DECIDED THAT HE WOULD CARVE A **HIDEOUS MONSTER** OUT OF **STONE**... A BEAST MORE **GROTESQUE** THAN THE **UGLIEST DEMONS** IN **HELL**."



"HE REASONED THAT IF THE GRANITE MONSTER WAS POSITIONED WHERE IT COULD CAST A WATCHFUL EYE ON HIS BODY, IT WOULD FRIGHTEN AWAY THE COWARDLY DEMONS... AND PROTECT HIS SOUL."



"THE OLD MAN SPENT HIS FINAL DAYS CARVING THE BEAST THAT WAS TO PROTECT HIM IN DEATH. HE NAMED IT GARGOYLE."



"AND WHEN THE MONSTER WAS FINISHED, ITS SAID THAT DEATH FINALLY KNOCKED UPON THE OLD STONEWORKER'S DOOR."



"AT HIS FUNERAL, THE OLD MAN WAS LAIN TO REST EXACTLY AS HE HAD REQUESTED... WITH THE GARGOYLE OVERLOOKING THE ENTIRE ROOM... BURNING INTO THE SHADOWS WITH HIS ALL-SEEING STARE."



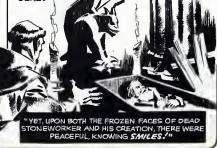
"THAT NIGHT, AFTER THE OLD MAN'S MOURNFUL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS HAD DEPARTED, IT'S SAID THERE WAS A STIRRING WITHIN THE SHADOWS."

"AND THREE SPRITELY DEMONS, GRINNING MALICIOUSLY SPRANG UPON THE OLD MAN'S BODY... TO STEAL HIS SOUL!"

"THERE WAS A GROWLING... TREMBLING THUNDER IN THE CHAPEL THAT NIGHT... FOLLOWED BY HIDEOUS, BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS!"



"WHEN DAWN AGAIN BROUGHT THE LIGHTED SANITY OF A NEW DAY, IT WAS A CAUTIOUS CARETAKER WHO BRAVELY VENTURED INTO THE CHAPEL... ONLY TO FIND THE WALLS SPLATTERED WITH BLOOD AND GORE!"



"YET, UPON BOTH THE FROZEN FACES OF DEAD STONEWORKER AND HIS CREATION, THERE WERE PEACEFUL, KNOWING SMILES!"



EVER  
THEREAFTER, A  
GARGOYLE HAS  
BEEN PLACED  
WITHIN THE LORD'S  
HOUSE... OVERLOOKING  
BOTH THE LIVING AND  
THE DEAD...  
PROTECTING THE  
RIGHTEOUS FROM  
MALICIOUS  
FRANKSTER  
DEMONS.

T-THEN  
THAT "MONSTER" IS  
PROTECTING SKRUFFY,  
DAD?



"HE'S LOOKING OVER  
YOUR BROTHER, SON...  
MAKING SURE NO ONE...  
NOTHING SHATTERS  
HIS PEACEFUL SLUMBER."



C-CAN WE STAY  
WITH SKRUFFY, TOO,  
DAD...

...T-TO HELP  
WATCH OVER HIM...  
TO BE WITH HIM  
FOR THE LAST  
TIME?



I WOULD HAVE  
BEEN DISAPPOINTED  
IF YOU HADN'T  
ASKED TIMMY.

LET ME MAKE SURE  
YOUR MOTHER WILL BE  
ALRIGHT... THEN YOU'N  
ME WILL WATCH OVER  
SKRUFFY UNTIL THE  
ANGELS GET HERE.











A THICK, GLEAMING RAY SHOWN THROUGH THE ORNATE CHURCH WINDOW IT STREAMED PAST THE BLOOD STAINED GUARDIANS... GARGOYLE AND THE MAN... AND TOUCHED THE FACE OF A CHILD...





O-DADDY! A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I... I DREAMT THAT THE DEMONS HAD COME! T-THEY CAME TO STEAL SKRUFFY'S SOUL... JUST LIKE YOU SAID!



B-BUT THE GARGOYLE CHASED THEM AWAY... THE GARGOYLE AND YOU!

I... IT WAS JUST A DREAM, WASN'T IT, DAD?



T-THE DEMONS DIDN'T TAKE SKRUFFY'S SOUL TO HELL... DID THEY?



AS A MATTER OF FACT WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP... THE ANGELS CAME.

THEY CAME TO SHOW SKRUFFY THE WAY TO HEAVEN.



NO, SON. THE DEMONS DIDN'T TAKE YOUR BROTHER TO HELL.



I... I'M GLAD, DAD!

NOW SKRUFFY'S SAFE... FOR EVER AND EVER!

OH... SKRUFFY HAS BEEN SAFE ALL ALONG!



# MEREDITH PICTURES PRESENTS

THE MOST TERRIFYING, BLOOD-CURDLING, SPINE-CHILLING MONSTERS  
OF ALL TIME IN ONE HORRIFYING, MIND-BENDING, NERVE SHATTERING  
MOTION PICTURE

## CAVALCADE OF MONSTERS

starring  
**MILOS BROKOFF**  
as  
**The Vampire**

**BUSTER GUTMAN**  
as  
**The Monster**

**IVANHOE SMITH**  
as  
**The Werewolf**

introducing  
**PENELOPE PEACH**  
as  
**The girl**

Produced by McMeredit

Directed by Algernon Hadenwood

NIGHTMARES FOR A YEAR OR YOUR MONEY BACK!

Coming soon to a theatre near you!

SEPTEMBER, 1945. JAPAN HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED THE POTSDAM DECLARATION, HARRY TRUMAN WAS STILL GIVING 'EM HELL, AND AMERICA ONCE MORE HOVERED ON THE BRINK OF PROSPERITY...

... WHILE I WAS LIVING IN A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT WAS *SEEDIER* THAN A VICTORY GARDEN.





OFFHAND, I'D SAY YOU'RE POOR, DESPERATE... AND A VIRGIN.

BRILLIANT! HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY TELL?

THE OTHER KIND DON'T BOTHER COMING IN HERE.

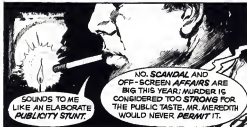


MR. MEREDITH WOULD BE FURIOUS IF HE KNEW I WAS HERE. BUT THERE'S BEEN TROUBLE AT THE STUDIO LATELY. WE HAD TO SHUT DOWN PRODUCTION ON "CAVALCADE OF MONSTERS".

TRAGIC. WHAT SORT OF TROUBLE?

"ABOUT A WEEK AGO, STAGEHANDS DISCOVERED THE BODY OF STU PITT, OUR PROP MAN; THERE WERE MARKS IN HIS NECK."

"THE SAME NIGHT, OUR LEADING MAN DISAPPEARED. MILOS BROKOFF WAS PLAYING THE ROLE OF... THE VAMPIRE."



SOUNDS TO ME LIKE AN ELABORATE PUBLICITY STUNT.

NO. SCANDAL AND OFF-SCREEN AFFAIRS ARE BIG THIS YEAR; MURDER IS CONSIDERED TOO STRONG FOR THE PUBLIC TASTE. MR. MEREDITH WOULD NEVER PERMIT IT.



THAT'S WHY HE DIDN'T WANT THE POLICE INVOLVED. STU'S MURDERER MUST BE CAUGHT AND MILOS FOUND... QUIETLY.

AS AN ACTRESS SHE WAS PASSABLE, BUT THE SCRIPT STANK, WITH PRODUCTION AT A STANDSTILL, MEREDITH RISKED LOSING HIS INVESTMENT. HE WASN'T STUPID ENOUGH TO BLOW IT ALL OVER A FEW DELICATE HEADLINES.

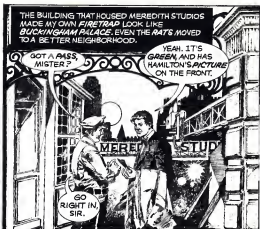
ALL RIGHT, MISS PEACH, I'LL POKE DOWN TO THE STUDIO IN THE MORNING AND SEE WHAT I CAN UNEARTH, IF YOU'LL PARDON THE EXPRESSION.





IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO QUESTION ANYONE, I SUGGEST YOU COME TONIGHT. FILMING TAKES PLACE BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN... THE STUDIO SHUTS DOWN DURING THE DAYLIGHT HOURS.

IT BOLSTERS MEREDITH'S IMAGE AS HORROR FILM PRODUCERS.



THE BUILDING THAT HOUSED MEREDITH STUDIOS MADE MY OWN FIRETRAP LOOK LIKE BUCKINGHAM PALACE. EVEN THE RATS MOVED TO A BETTER NEIGHBORHOOD.

GOT A PASS, MISTER?

YEAH. IT'S GREEN, AND HAS HAMILTON'S PICTURE ON THE FRONT.

GO RIGHT IN, SIR.

I MADE MY WAY TO THE SOUNDSTAGE, WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN BUILT WITH CONSTRUCTION PAPER, AND WAS GREETED BY A MAN WHO MADE JACK ARMSTRONG LOOK LIKE AN UNDESIRABLE ALIEN.

DON'T SNEEZE... YOU MIGHT BLOW THE SET OVER. I'VE HAD THICKER CARDBOARD IN MY SHIRTS.

THESE ARE LEAN TIMES FOR MONSTERS. THE HORROR CYCLE'S ABOUT OVER, BUT MEREDITH'S STILL TRYING TO SQUEEZE THAT LAST DROP OUT OF IT. BY THE WAY, I'M IVANHOE SMITH.

THE NAME WAS MY AGENT'S IDEA... SAID IT WAS SOMETHING PEOPLE WOULD REMEMBER AND YOU ARE --?



RICHARD MIDNIGHT. DO YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND MEREDITH?

SURE. RIGHT THROUGH THAT CORRIDOR. WELL, SEE YOU AROUND... I PLAY THE WEREWOLF IN THIS PICTURE. AND IT'S TIME TO REHEARSE MY GROWLING.

I STARTED TOWARD MEREDITH'S OFFICE AND ALMOST COLLIDED WITH A WALKING MOUNTAIN. HIS NAME WAS BUSTER GUTMAN AND HE WAS NOT QUITE AS WIDE AS THE HINDENBERG.

WATCH IT, BUDDY!

EXIT



THERE WAS SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT HIM. I'D SEEN THE SAME DUMB EXPRESSION ON A NUMBER OF FIGHTERS, FLUNKIES, AND COGS, BUT THIS ONE RANG DINNER BELL IN MY HEAD.

**SMILE... IF SHOOTING  
DOESN'T RESUME, YOU COULD  
ALWAYS RENT YOURSELF OUT  
AS MOUNT RUSHMORE.**



HELL, I'D GO BACK TO BEING A PRIZEFIGHTER. "KING OF THE RING" THEY CALLED ME, TILL MEREDITH DECIDED TO MAKE ME A STAR.

**SOME STAR? NOW  
THEY CALL ME "THE CREEPY  
FROM THE CHEAPIES."**



I HAD ALMOST MADE IT INTO MEREDITH'S OFFICE, WHEN A DOORKNOB TRIED TO WIDEN THE SPACE BETWEEN MY ARMS.

**CRAZY, YOU ARE! WE CAN'T JUST WRITE HIM OUT OF THE SCRIPT! MILO'S BROKOFF IS THE SCRIPT!**

MR.  
ISHERWOOD,  
I PRESUME



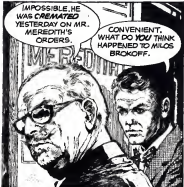
YES.  
WHO ARE

THE MAN WHO'S  
GOING TO FIND MILOŠ  
BROKOFF... IF HE'S STILL  
ALIVE, I'D LIKE TO START  
BY EXAMINING THE BODY  
OF THE PROP MAN.



IMPOSSIBLE, HE  
WAS CREMATED  
YESTERDAY ON MR.  
MEREDITH'S  
ORDERS.

CONVENIENT.  
WHAT DO YOU THINK  
HAPPENED TO MILOS  
BROKOFF.



I THINK TWELVE YEARS OF VAMPIRE ROLES FINALLY TOOK THEIR TOLL ON HIS MIND. I THINK HE IDENTIFIED SO STRONGLY WITH THE ROLE, HE BEGAN TO BELIEVE HE WAS ONE. AND I THINK YOU'RE A NOSY SON OF A--

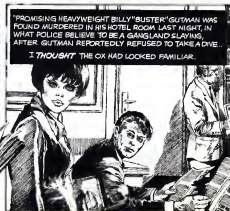
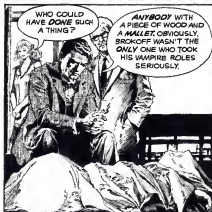
SUDDENLY THERE CAME A SCREAM, LOUD ENOUGH TO SHATTER A SHOTGLASS IN PITTSBURGH. PENELOPE PEACH WASN'T *THAT* GOOD AN ACTRESS... IT HAD TO BE FOR *REAL*.





MILO BROKOFF LAY THERE, FLOATING IN HIS OWN **BLOOD**. HIS HEAD HAD BEEN SEVERED, **GARLIC** STUFFED IN HIS MOUTH AND A **STAKE** RUN THROUGH HIS **HEART**.

HE WAS DEADDER THAN YESTERDAY'S DINNER WHICH AT THE MOMENT WAS TRYING TO **LEAVE** MY BODY THE SAME WAY IT CAME **IN**.



LOS ANGELES WAS WET AND RAINY, AND THE ROADS SLICKER THAN A BILLY SUNDAY SERMON, AS I DROVE BACK TO MEREDITH STUDIOS. THE PIECES WERE FALLING IN PLACE LIKE SOLDIERS DURING A DRILL.



MR. ISHERWOOD!  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING  
HERE SO EARLY?

TAKING A FEW  
NOTES... TRYING TO  
FIGURE OUT HOW MUCH  
FOOTAGE WE CAN SALVAGE,  
WITH BROK-OFF OUT OF  
THE PICTURE.



THEN YOU  
ARE PLANNING  
TO RESUME  
SHOOTING?

OF COURSE!  
MEREDITH NEEDS  
THIS PICTURE TO PUT  
THE COMPANY IN  
THE BLACK.



WELL, IF IT ISN'T  
LAZARUS! HOW'S THE  
MOB TREATING YOU  
THESE DAYS, BILLY?

OR DO THEY EVEN  
KNOW ABOUT YOUR  
HUMPTY DUMPTY  
ACT?



WHAT ARE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?

I'M TALKING  
ABOUT A DEAD  
MAN, SUCCESSFULLY  
PIECED TOGETHER ON  
A LABORATORY  
TABLE, AND BROUGHT  
BACK TO LIFE!

YOUR MOUTH IS A  
LITTLE TOO BIG, MISTER...  
I'M GOING TO WIDEN YOUR  
FACE SO IT FITS BETTER.



IF I'D TAKEN THE FULL BRUNT OF  
THE PUNCH, I PROBABLY WOULD'VE  
BOUNCED ALL THE WAY TO SAN  
FRANCISCO. INSTEAD, IT JUST  
BROKE TWO TEETH AND SET A NEW  
WORLD'S RECORD FOR DISTANCE  
FLOWN WITHOUT BENEFIT OF A  
PLANE.

EVEN THAT WASN'T ENOUGH TO  
SATISFY THE HUMAN MATTERHORN.  
HE WAS COMING IN FOR THE KILL.





MY FIRST SHOT CAUGHT HIM IN THE **THROAT**. THE NEXT TWO JUST ABOVE THE **EYES**. THEY MADE HIM STOP AND **SNEEZE**.

IT TOOK THREE **MORE** SHOTS TO **TOPPLE** HIM.



WELL, THERE'S **ANOTHER** SCRIPT **REVISION**.

THERE'LL BE A LOT **MORE** BEFORE I'M DONE. **CONSIDER**: MEREDITH ONLY **SHOOTS** PICTURES **BETWEEN** **SUNSET** AND **DAWN**... A **VAMPIRE** **MURDER**, FOLLOWED BY A **"VAMPIRE"** WITH A **STAKE** IN ITS **HEART**...



A **RECONSTRUCTED** **MAN** **PLAYING** **FRANKENSTEIN'S** **MONSTER**... IT SEEMS TO ME **MEREDITH** CARRIES **METHOD** **ACTING** A BIT TOO **FAIR**... **HIRING** **REAL** **MONSTERS** TO **PLAY** THEIR **COUNTERPARTS**.

AND TO THINK... THE **CRITICS** ALWAYS **SAID** OUR **MOVIES** WERE **UNCONVINCING**!



GREAT LITTLE **ACTRESS**. ISN'T SHE? NOW THAT **BROKOFF'S** **SCRATCHED**, WE'LL **BEEP** UP HER **PART**... MAYBE MAKE A **FEMALE** **VAMPIRE** OUT OF HER.

THAT'S IT! **BROKOFF** PUTS IN A **CAMEO** IN THE **BEGINNING**... **BITES** THE **VICTIM**... THEN WE **CENTER** THE **MOVIE** AROUND **HER**.



YOU'RE UNDER **ARREST**, **MEREDITH**. FOR THE **MURDER** OF **MILES** **BROKOFF**.

ALL RIGHT, **SHAMUS**. I **KNEW** THE **TRUTH** WOULD **COME** OUT **EVENTUALLY** BUT **HEAR** ME **OUT** **FIRST**...

IT WAS A **NEAT** **PACKAGE**. **MEREDITH** **COLLECTED** **FREAKS**, **MONSTERS** FOR HIS **MOVIE** **ROLES**. ONE OF THEM **SHOT** OUT OF **CONTROL** AND **ATTACKED** A **PROP** **MAN**, SO **MEREDITH** **DEALT** WITH HIM THE **ONLY** **WAY** HE **COULD**.

**KILLING** A **VAMPIRE** **CERTAINLY** **QUALIFIED** AS **JUSTIFIABLE** **HOMICIDE**. THERE'D **BE** NO **CHARGES**. AT **LEAST** THERE **WOULDN'T** HAVE **BEEN** IF **MEREDITH'S** **STORY** WERE **TRUE**!





I DELIVERED MEREDITH TO THE *BULLS-IN-BLUE* AND RETURNED TO MY OFFICE WHERE ONE PENELOPE PEACH, ALMOST-MOVIE-STAR, WAS WAITING TO THANK ME.



MEREDITH WAS A SHREWD *BUSINESSMAN*. HE SAW THAT HORROR FILMS WERE WINDING DOWN, SO HE PLANNED AN ELABORATE *HOAX*. IF IT'D WORKED, HIS LAST PICTURE WOULD MAKE *MILLIONS!*

HE HAD THE IDEA YEARS AGO, WHEN HE HIRED BILLY GUTMAN AND ARRANGED THE FAKE *NEWSPAPER* STORY ABOUT HIS *DEATH*.



BROKOFF WENT ALONG WITH THE *NIGHT FILMING* GIMMICK, NOT REALIZING HE WAS MEREDITH'S *SCAPEGOAT*. MEREDITH KILLED THE PROP MAN, MADE IT LOOK LIKE A *VAMPIRE* KILLING, AND HAD THE BODY *CREMATED* BEFORE ANYONE COULD EXAMINE IT CLOSELY.

HE THEN KILLED BROKOFF, KNOWING THAT WHEN THE MURDERS WERE *INVESTIGATED*, IT WOULD APPEAR HE HAD SLAIN A *REAL VAMPIRE!*



WHAT A PUBLICITY *PLAY!* CONVINCE THE WORLD YOU'VE CAST ACTUAL *MONSTERS* AND THEY'LL FLOCK TO THE BOX OFFICE LIKE *GEESE*. HE COULD EVEN RE-ISSUE SOME *PAST BOMBS* AND MAKE THEM PAY OFF!

HOW DID YOU KNOW MEREDITH WAS *LYING*... THAT THE *MONSTERS* WERE NOT *AUTHENTIC*?



A HORROR FILM PRODUCER SHOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION TO *DETAIL*. AS SOON AS I SAW THE *FILM CLIPS* OF YOU AND BROKOFF I *REMEMBERED...*

...A *REAL VAMPIRE* CAN'T BE *PHOTOGRAPHED!*



WHEN PENELOPE PEACH FIRST WALKED INTO MY OFFICE, SHE WAS *POOR, DESPERATE* AND A *VIRGIN*.

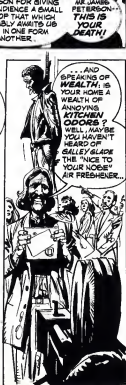
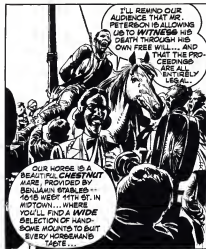
WHEN SHE LEFT, SHE WAS *STILL POOR*.



# The FREE LANCER









DEAN! THANK GOD! I WAS AFRAID YOU MIGHT MISS THE FLIGHT... I CALLED AT THE LAST MINUTE, I KNOW, AND I'LL MAKE THIS UP TO YOU I PROMISE...

YOU'VE LOST WEIGHT, JEFF. IS IT THAT BAD? OR DO I HAVE TIME FOR A SHOWER?



WHAT TIME IS IT HERE ANYWAY? I'VE GOT ROCKET LAG.

WILL YOU SEE HER, DEAN?... TALK TO HER? I CAN'T ANYMORE! SHE WON'T LISTEN TO ME, BUT YOU... I THOUGHT PERHAPS...

IT'S BAD THIS TIME, DEAN... REALLY BAD! JEANNE MOVED OUT! FOR GOOD, SAYS!... TAKEN SOME APARTMENT IN NORTHBROOK-RANCY PLACE--DON'T KNOW HOW SHE AFFORDS IT!...

ALLE



DROP YOURSELF OFF AT HOME. I'LL TAKE THE CAR. YOU HAVE HER ADDRESS?



'LO, SIX.

"YEAH I LOVE MAH BABY AN' I HOLD HER TIGHT--I SQUEEZE MAH BABY IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT..."

WELL... AND TO WHAT DO I OWE THIS UNEXPECTED ANTICIPATION? DON'T TELL ME-- LET ME GUESS: JEFF CALLED YOU! RIGHT? AND YOU JUMPED IN YOUR SHINY LEAR ROCKET AND FLEW SIX THOUSAND LIGHT YEARS TO RESCUE YOUR LITTLE SISTER'S MARRIAGE... FOR THE FIFTH TIME...



WHAT INTERESTING MUSIC. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D CULTIVATED A TASTE FOR THE TOTALLY NINE...

"YEA I LOVE MAH HON-- (CLICK)"



IT GOES WITH CIGARETTE -- "BRAIN BENDERS"---HEARD OF THE BRAND? NO, I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T--THEY'RE ILLEGAL ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE GALAXY, BUT NOT HERE ON GOOD OLD DEMOS... NOT HERE ON "LITTLE BOOON" HERE THEY'RE ALL THE RAGE...

THAT AND INCEST, LIKE TO TRY A LITTLE INCEST, DEAN DEAR?



SURE! AND THEN WE CAN SHOOT A LITTLE DOPE, BURN A FEW HOUSES AND DRIVE OVER A CLIFF SOMEWHERE.

THAT IS, UNLESS YOU'D RATHER TALK ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE...

I'M A LITTLE TIRED. DEAN... DO YOU SUPPOSE IT COULD WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR?



TELL YOU WHAT: YOU PUT ON SOME FRESH MAKE-UP, GRAB A COAT AND I'LL BUY YOU A VERY EXPENSIVE, VERY HIGH CALORIE MEAL...

OH, BUT I'VE **ALREADY** EATEN A VERY EXPENSIVE MEAL.. I'M **LORED** NOW, DIDN'T JEFF TELL YOU? LOOK AROUND YOU, I'M RICH... **FILTHY** RICH...

EVER HEAR OF A SHOW CALLED THIS IS YOUR DEATH?



YOU WON A PRIZE?

HA-HA! YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF THE SHOW.. I SIGNED A CONTRACT, DEAN... AN IRREVERSIBLE CONTRACT--WHICH STATES, IN A NUTSHELL, THAT I WILL RECEIVE A CHECK FOR 10,000 DOLLARS...

...EVERY WEEK FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.

WHAT DOES THE SHOW GET?



THE SHOW? NOTHING MUCH-- JUST ME--ALL OF ME.. MY LIFE ... OR MY DEATH TO BE MORE PRECISE. YOU SEE, THAT'S WHY THEY NAMED IT THIS IS YOUR DEATH!

...IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE DYING. CLEVER? MOST OF THE CONTESTANTS ARE TERMINALLY ILL. **ANYWAY**, BUT OCCASIONALLY A **HEALTHY SOUL** LIKE ME WILL POP UP WHO NEEDS THE DOUGH...

IN FACT, QUITE A FEW OF US ARE POPPING UP LATELY...



YOU'RE JOKING, OF COURSE... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, ILLEGAL...

ON **DEIMOS**?-- WHERE THE AIR IS RIPE WITH DECADENCE AND ALL YOUR NIGHTMARES COME TRUE? DON'T BE SILLY...

OF COURSE, I MAY NOT HAVE TO APPEAR ON THE SHOW AT ALL, IF MY **NUMBER** DOESN'T COME UP, THAT HAPPENS TOO. THE MORE PEOPLE WHO SIGN CONTRACTS, THE LESS CHANCE I'LL GET IT... PARDON THE EXPRESSION, THEY CHOOSE AT **RANDOM**.

MEANWHILE, MY SON GETS A COLLEGE EDUCATION, MY HUSBAND ESCAPES A CRUMMY MARRIAGE AND I...



--AND YOU GET STONED EVERY NIGHT WAITING IT OUT. LOVELY. WOULDN'T A HOT TUB AND A SHARP RAZOR BE MUCH QUICKER?

AND MUCH LESS LUCRATIVE.

IT'S THE MONEY I NEEDED, DEAN, NOT ETERNAL REST.

AND LET'S FACE IT: JEFF JUST ISN'T GOING TO MAKE IT BIG. JEFF ISN'T GOING TO MAKE IT AT ALL...



MAY I SEE THE CONTRACT, PLEASE?

YOU CAN'T TEAR IT UP, LOVE--IT'S **BINDING**. I'VE SEALED MY FATE THIS TIME... GONE ALL THE WAY.

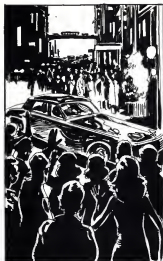
BUT DON'T LET ME MAKE IT SOUND HOPELESS, DEAN. TO THE CONTRARY, WHAT WE HAD BEFORE WAS HOPELESS--NOW, AT LEAST, THERE'S A CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS... A LITTLE HAPPINESS ANYWAY...



YES, I CAN SEE YOU'RE ALL JUST RADIANT WITH HAPPINESS.

TRY NOT TO FALL DOWN AND HURT YOURSELF--I'LL BE BACK...

FORGET IT, DEAN. THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO...



HA-HA! A DELIGHTFUL EXHIBITION OF RAW TERROR, MISS LAVERNE! ONE OF YOUR FINEST PERFORMANCES. I'M SURE THE AUDIENCE AGREES... AND WE'VE CAPTURED IT ALL WITH OUR CAMERAS!



CRAZY BITCH!



MISS LAVERNE, MAY I HAVE YOUR AUTO... OOP!



JUST LISTEN TO THAT APPLAUSE, MISS LAVERNE... MUSIC TO YOUR EARS ISN'T IT?

WOULD YOU CARE TO TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR CAREER BEFORE THE BIG MOMENT?

MY CAREER? ... YES... YES, MY CAREER...





WELL... I... I SUPPOSE I OWE IT ALL TO YOUR PROGRAM... TO THE CONTRACT. BEFORE THIS IS YOUR DEATH, I WAS JUST ANOTHER EXTRA ON THE WARNERS LOT, POUNDING THE PAVEMENT EVERYDAY LOOKING FOR BIT PARTS.

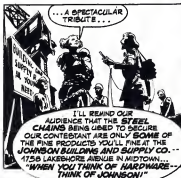
THEN... WHEN I STARTED RECEIVING MY CHECKS SIX YEARS AGO... I BEGAN TO MEET IMPORTANT PEOPLE... GOT MORE EXPOSURE... LANDED SOME GOOD PARTS. THE REST IS HISTORY.

MY YEARS WITH YOUR SHOW WERE THE HAPPIEST YEARS OF MY LIFE...



... I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD END... AND OUR HEART-FELT SYMPATHY MISS LAVERNE, THAT IT HAD TO END... BUT THEN, THAT'S WHAT OUR SHOW IS ALL ABOUT!

THINK OF IT AS YOUR FINAL ROLE! A SPECTACULAR TRIBUTE TO A GREAT ACTRESS!



... A SPECTACULAR TRIBUTE...

I'LL REMIND OUR AUDIENCE THAT THE STEEL CHAINS BEING USED TO SECURE OUR CONTESTANT ARE ONLY SOME OF THE FINE PRODUCTS YOU'LL FIND AT THE JOHNSON BUILDINGS AND SUPPLY CO. -- 1756 LAKE SHORE AVENUE IN MIDTOWN... "WHEN YOU THINK OF HARDWARE... THINK OF JOHNSON!"



WELL, I SEE OUR CREW IS ALL READY!

MISS KITTY LAVERNE-- THIS IS YOUR DEATH!

OR... TO BE MORE APPROPRIATE: SHOULD I SIMPLY SAY: BA-DE, BA-DE THAT'S ALL FOLKS!



OUR UNDER-WATER CREW BRINGS YOU THESE CLOSE-UPS OF MISS LAVERNE'S DEATH AS CLOSE AS A THIS IS YOUR DEATH! EXCLUSIVE!

CHOK!... GASP!... BUBBLE...



DISGUSTING! ABSOLUTELY DISGUSTING!

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT KIND OF TRASH IS ALLOWED ON THE TUBE?



WELL? DID YOU SEE JEANIE? WHAT DID SHE SAY?

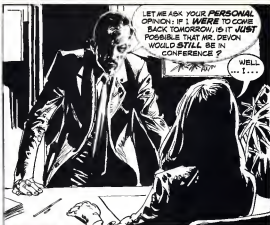
SIT BACK DOWN, JEFF. I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU...



EXCUSE ME, BUT I'VE BEEN WAITING TO SEE MR. DEVON SINCE TEN O'CLOCK THIS MORNING. IS HE FREE YET?

I'M SORRY, SIR... MR. DEVON IS STILL IN CONFERENCE. PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO TRY TOMORROW...

THIS IS YOUR PART



LET ME ASK YOUR PERSONAL OPINION: IF I WERE TO COME BACK TOMORROW, IS IT JUST POSSIBLE THAT MR. DEVON WOULD STILL BE IN CONFERENCE?

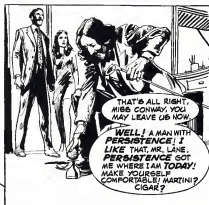
WELL...

... I...



THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT...

WAIT! YOU CAN'T GO BARGING IN THERE!



THAT'S ALL RIGHT, MISS CONWAY, YOU MAY LEAVE US NOW.

WELL! A MAN WITH PERSISTENCE! I LIKE THAT, MR. LANE. PERSISTENCE GOT ME WHERE I AM TODAY! MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE! MARTINI? CIGAR?



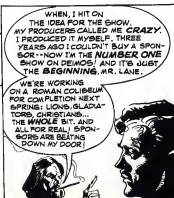
CONTRACTS, MR. LANE... OF ALL THE CONTESTANTS ON OUR SHOW! I'VE FRAMED EVERYONE OF THEM TO REMIND ME THAT LIFE IS NEITHER CHEAP NOR UNDISCIPLINED... JUST NEGOTIABLE...!

NOT ONE OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS WAS COERCED INTO SIGNING... EVERYTHING IS LEGAL AND ABOVE-BOARD. IT'S MERELY ANOTHER FORM OF GAMBLING... A MORE SOPHISTICATED FORM!

RED INK?

BLOOD. HA-HA! A THEATRICAL WHIM OF MINE... I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE I'M THE DEVIL, BUT IT HELPS THE PUBLICITY DEPT.

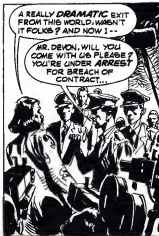
YOU SEE, MR. LANE, PEOPLE WANT TO BELIEVE IN THE DEVIL, THEY WANT TO SEE DEATH--IN ALL ITS FORMS--IN ALL ITS UGLINESS! THEY'RE OBSESSED WITH IT! I SIMPLY GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT!

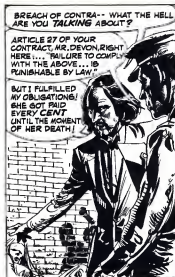


WHEN, I HIT ON THE IDEA FOR THE SHOW, MY PRODUCERS CALLED ME CRAZY. I PRODUCED IT MYSELF. THREE YEARS AGO I COULDN'T BUY A SPONSOR--NOW I'M THE NUMBER ONE SHOW ON DEMOS! AND IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING, MR. LANE.

WE'RE WORKING ON A ROMAN COLISEUM FOR COMPLETION NEXT SPRING: LIONS, GLADIATORS, CHRISTIANS... THE WHOLE BIT. AND ALL FOR REAL! SPONSORS ARE BEATING DOWN MY DOOR!







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JOURNEY ALONG  
WITH THE CREW  
OF THE  
ENTERPRISE BY  
TRACING THEIR  
TREK THROUGH  
SPACE AND TIME  
ON A STAR TREK  
1977 (STARDATE)  
CALENDAR, THE  
GRID INDICATES  
STAR AND STANOARD  
EARTHLY DATES.  
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PHOTOS, ALSO A...



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#27725-XXL, size 18-boys large (adult small), long sleeve \$7.00



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#27726-M, size 12-boys medium, short sleeve \$6.50  
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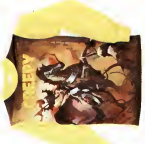
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#27729-XXL, size 18-boys large (adult small), long sleeve \$7.00



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#27730-M, size 12-boys medium, short sleeve \$6.50  
#27730-L, size 14-boys large (adult small), short sleeve \$6.50  
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